Import of Newsprint by STC

3460. SHRI SATYANARAYANA DRONAMRAJU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the year 1992-93 the STC imported standard newsprint only from 'tested sources' that is who had supplied newsprint to STC previously;

(b) whether it is a fact that STC did not obtain any performance (Bond) Earnest maney and/or Bank Guarantee from these suppliers of newsprint;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) if not the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The procedure was in accordance with STC's pre decanalisation import practice.

Number of Patents Registered

3461. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of patents registered on an average in a year in the country;

(b) the number of patents registered in each during each of last three years; and

(c) the number of patents de-registered in the last three years with broad reasons?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) The number of patents registered (granted) on an average in a year in the country during the last 10 years is 1898.

(b) The number of patents registered (granted) during the last three years is as under:—

Year	No. of patent registered
1993-94	1746
1994-95	1759
1995-96	1533

(c) During last three years, one patent, namely, patent number 168950 entitled "method of producing transformed cotton cells by tissue culture" was de-registered/ revoked in public interest under the powers vested in Central Government by virtue of provisions of Section 66 of the Patents Act, 1970.

Export Processing Zones Operating in India

3462. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) number of Export Processing Zones operating in India and their locations;

(b) the target set during last five years for each such zone and achievements made;

(c) whether it is a fact zonal authorities have set up blocks for NRIs exclusively for electronic software and hardware sectors; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Seven Export Processing Zones are operating in India located at Kandla (Gujarat), Mumbai (Maharashtra), Noida (Uttar Pradesh), Madras (Tamil Nadu), Cochin (Kerala), Falta (West Bengal) and Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).

(b) .Zone-wise export targets and actual exports effected by these zones during the last 5 years are indicated at statement *(see* below).

(c) and (d) Investors in EPZs are treated on equal footing and no separate blocks exist in the Zones exclusively for NRIs.

Statement *Expor! Target and Achievement of Export Processing Zones during ihe last Five Years*

(Rs. crores)

Zone	199142		1992-93		1993-94		1994-95		1995-96	
	Target	Achieve-ment	Target	Achieve-ment	Target	Achieve-ment	Target	Achieve-ment	Target	Achieve-ment
KAFTZ	413	427.18	200	167.21	350	270.36	350	320.03	420	325.2
SEEPZ	475	500.17	650	806.24	1000	1107.36	1350	1549.46	1950	1876.2
NEPZ	90	70.84	145	145.23	250	262.62	350	367.00	475	496.89
MEPZ	134	122.47	255	177.13	270	200.20	270	281.38	39(1	391.91
CEPZ	24	28.58	50	62.25	140	83.81	120	102.53	135	120.3
FEPZ	52	27.90	30	18.25	40	35.56	50	32.31	50	24.04
VEPZ	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	0.40	15	0.89
	1188	1177.14	1330	1376.31	2050	1959.91	2500	2653.11	3435	3235.62

OM Age Pension

.3463. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce old age pension as a welfare measure for widows, handicapped, aged farmers of 60 years and above an other old man with no source of income;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) The Govt, of India is already implementing through the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment a centrally sponsored programme called National Old Age Pension Scheme (N0APS) for providing old age pension to the aged under the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP).

(D) The NMBS is a eentrally sponsored programme in the area of poverty alleviation both in the Rural and Urban Areas. Under this scheme. 100% central assistance is extended to the States/UTs to provide benefit under it in accordance with the norms, guidelines and conditions laid down by the Central Government.

The benefit available under this scheme is as per the following criteria:—

(i) The age of the applicant male or female is 65 years and above.

(ii) The applicant is a destitute in the sense of having little or no regular means of subsistance from his/her own sources or through financial support from family Members or the other sources.

(iii) The amount of old age pension is Rs. 75/- p.m. for the purpose of Claiming assistance.

Widows, handicapped persons or farmers, below the age of 65 years are not entitled for the benefit under the scheme.

(c) Does not arise.

Rubber Plantations in the North-Eastern Region

3464. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rubber Board has arranged/ordered any survey for rubber plantation in the North East region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and